



**City of Indianapolis
Combined Sewer Overflow Long-Term Control Planning
Summary of Public Education Sessions**



CROWE CHIZEK

**Prepared by
Crowe Chizek and Perras & Associates
July 2000**

Introduction

Indianapolis is among some 1,000 cities nationwide and 106 communities in Indiana with combined sewers that overflow into rivers and streams during rain storms or snow melt. In Indianapolis, these overflows send raw sewage, human waste, toilet paper, disease-causing bacteria, viruses, and other pollutants directly into our waterways, causing these streams to exceed water quality standards for dissolved oxygen and bacteria. State and federal regulations require the City of Indianapolis to develop a long-term control plan for controlling these sewage overflows and meeting water quality standards.

Public participation is an important part of the long-term planning process for controlling combined sewer overflows (CSOs). Through public participation, the City of Indianapolis plans to educate citizens on the problem and the city's options, and to seek their feedback on such key issues as level of control, cost, and priority areas. The planning process includes:

1. The release of a comprehensive report on the city's options for controlling combined sewer overflows
2. The formation of a Combined Sewer Overflow Advisory Committee
3. The creation of a special website and telephone hotline for accessing information on the sewage overflow issue
4. A series of public education meetings throughout the community
5. A series of public input sessions to get citizen feedback on key issues and options
6. Development of a draft long-term control plan
7. A public hearing on the draft long-term control plan
8. Development of a final long-term control plan for submission to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

This document summarizes public participation activities conducted during July 2000, culminating in the public education sessions noted in step 4 above. It describes the city's activities and summarizes citizen questions and comments received during the first phase of the CSO public participation process.

Initial Announcement

On July 11, Mayor Bart Peterson held a press conference along Pleasant Run on the city's east side to release a study outlining options to clean up the city's rivers, creeks and streams. The mayor also announced plans to form a Combined Sewer Overflow Advisory Committee. He urged citizens to help evaluate the alternatives during a series of public meetings and forums. "At the dawn of the 21st Century, it is simply unacceptable for this city to continue releasing sewage into our waterways at such an alarming rate," the mayor said in a press release. "The federal government is pushing cities to fix the problem, and I agree that action in Indianapolis is long overdue." The study represented seven years of research conducted by the city Departments of Public Works and Capital Asset Management and a team of private consultants. In a press release, the mayor announced a schedule for upcoming education meetings, public input sessions, and advisory committee meetings. The press conference was covered by all local news media outlets, including the Indianapolis Star; television stations WRTV, WISH, WTHR, and WXIN; radio station WIBC; and other news organizations. Press clippings associated with this announcement and other CSO-related activities are attached to this document.

Advisory Committee

On July 24, Mayor Peterson named an advisory panel to help gather public input on the sewage overflow problem. The committee represents neighborhoods, business leaders, engineers and other community leaders. The purpose of the committee is to:

1. Review the consultants' report on the city's options for controlling combined sewer overflows and improving water quality in Indianapolis;
2. Review opinions and feedback received from Marion County residents during a three-month public participation process; and
3. Advise the mayor on how the city should proceed in developing a long-term control plan for combined sewer overflows.

Committee members are Merri Anderson, Marion County Alliance of Neighborhood Associations; Leon Bates, Mapleton-Fall Creek Neighborhood Association; Bob Bowen, CEO, Bowen Engineering; Thomas Cobb, attorney and utility law judge, Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission; Rachel Cooper, president, Southeast Community Organization; Dennis Charles, accountant, John J. Madden & Co.; Daniel Fugate, chairman, Westside Cooperative Organization; Stu Grauel, Indianapolis Power & Light; Bruce Jacobs, president, Near Eastside Community Organization; Gary Koss, president, Laborers International Union, Local 120; Don Murray, facilities management, Eli Lilly & Co.; John S. Myrland, president, Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce; Mark Sneathen, project engineer, RQAW Corp.; and Kevin Strunk, president/geologist, Wabash Resources & Consulting.

Advisory committee meetings have been scheduled on July 24, August 2, August 28, September 14, October 12, and November 15.

Information Repositories

The city used three methods to give citizens easy access to information on the combined sewer overflow issue: public libraries, a website, and a dedicated telephone hotline. Copies of the city's study were placed in all 25 Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library branches, along with a schedule of public meetings. In addition, the city created a special website (www.indygov.org/dpw/cso) for accessing information on sewer overflows. The website includes: a downloadable copy of the city's CSO study in PDF format, a downloadable copy of a 16-page CSO Decision-making Guide (a condensed version of the study), public meeting dates and times, related links to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Indiana Department of Environmental Management, and a feedback form for citizen comments and questions. Finally, the telephone hotline (706-2622) includes recorded messages with the dates, times and locations of upcoming public meetings, as well as how to obtain written materials on the sewage overflow issue. Citizens also can leave recorded comments or questions on the hotline.

Public Education Sessions

From July 24-31, the Departments of Capital Asset Management and Public Works hosted six public education meetings throughout Marion County to explain the options outlined in the consultants' report and to answer citizens' questions. Meeting sites were selected to ensure that most Marion County residents were within a 15- or 20-minute drive of at least one meeting location.

Meetings were advertised in two press releases from the mayor's office, on government cable Channel 16's calendar of events, as well in a mailing to 600 neighborhood associations, environmental groups, organizations, and elected officials, including state legislators and township assessors and trustees. Mailings also were sent to officials in the excluded cities of Lawrence, Beech Grove and Greenwood, who receive sewage treatment services from the City of Indianapolis. The city also included CSO information in quarterly sewer bill inserts sent to 240,000 residents during July and August. The inserts included a reference to the website and telephone number, where a schedule of meetings was available. Meetings were well-publicized in The Indianapolis Star, local television and radio newscasts, and smaller neighborhood newspapers. DCAM and DPW officials also gave CSO presentations to the city's Board of Asset Management and Public Works, City-County Council committees on public works and capital asset management, the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, and other organizations.

In all, 164 people attended at least one of the education sessions. A session-by-session breakdown is shown below:

Date	Time	Location	Attendees
July 24	2:30-4:30 p.m.	Near Northside (2450 N. Meridian St.)	54
July 25	7-9 p.m.	Northwest (5665 Lafayette Road)	26
July 26	7-9 p.m.	Southwest (5401 W. Washington St.)	23
July 27	7-9 p.m.	Southeast (6500 Southeastern Ave.)	20
July 29	9-11 a.m.	Downtown (200 E. Washington St.)	13
July 31	7-9 p.m.	Northeast (7701 Allisonville Road)	28

A 16-page booklet summarizing the key issues and options was prepared to guide citizens through the CSO education sessions. Both English and Spanish versions of the booklets were available. (A copy is attached to this report.) The education sessions also included a 70-minute Powerpoint and video presentation by Dr. B.J. Bischoff of Crowe Chizek, a nationally known public policy facilitator and trainer, and Jodi Perras of Perras & Associates, an Indianapolis environmental communications and policy consultant. A copy of the Powerpoint presentation is attached to this report. The presentation covered the following general topics:

1. What are combined sewer overflows?
2. Where are Indianapolis' sewer overflow points?
3. What happens to the waterways when our sewers overflow?
4. Why were our sewers built this way?
5. What other sources of pollution affect our waterways?
6. Indianapolis is not alone: almost 1,000 U.S. cities have CSOs
7. What is being done to fix the problem?
8. What are Indianapolis' goals for fighting sewage overflows?
9. Strategies for CSO control: Capture and storage of more combined sewage in the current sewer system
10. Strategies for CSO control: Expanding wastewater treatment plants
11. Strategies for CSO control: Building new storage tunnels or tanks to capture wastewater volume
12. Other water quality improvement options: Converting septic systems to sewers
13. Other water quality improvement options: Industrial pretreatment
14. Other water quality improvement options: Infiltration/inflow reduction
15. Other water quality improvement options: Stormwater management
16. Other water quality improvement options: Streambank restoration
17. Other water quality improvement options: Pollution prevention
18. Key Issue: How much sewage control should Indianapolis choose?
19. Three possible overflow targets: 12-, 7- or 4-storms/year
20. The benefits of the three possible targets
21. The costs of the three possible targets
22. How costs will affect monthly sewer bills during the first five years of a 20-year project
23. Key Issue: What sensitive areas along our streams deserve priority attention?
24. Oxygen problems along White River and possible options (artificial waterfall or fountains)
25. Oxygen and low flow problems along Fall Creek and possible options (reclamation facility, dam removal, dam modifications, or a fountain)
26. Schedule of upcoming public input sessions and how to obtain more information

Following the presentation, participants were asked to write their questions on index cards and any comments on a comment sheet. Questions then were answered by DPW or DCAM staff, if possible. All citizen questions and comments were saved, and were to be posted on the CSO website with the

city's answers. A list of citizen questions and comments received to date is attached to this report, along with the city's responses. This list was compiled during the public education sessions as well as through the website and telephone hotline. It will be available in print during the public input sessions.

The questions and comments from citizens covered many issues, including cost/financing, using existing sewers for storage, sewer system maintenance and repair, storage tunnels and tanks, treatment plants, stormwater pollution, septic systems, industrial discharges, dam removal/modifications, sewer infiltration/inflow, planning, flood/drainage problems, bacteria, sewer bills, and the proposed Fall Creek reclamation facility.

In order to reach even more citizens, the city-owned cable television station, WCTY-TV (Channel 16) taped the July 25 CSO education meeting. WCTY reaches 250,000 households in Marion County. Channel 16 rebroadcast the education session on the following dates and times: July 27 (7 p.m.), July 28 (3 a.m., 11 a.m., 9:30 p.m.), July 29 (8 a.m., 6:30 p.m.), July 30 (5 a.m., 3:30 p.m.), July 31 (2 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 11 p.m.); August 1 (9:30 a.m.); and August 2 (1:30 a.m.). In addition, the session was rebroadcast on WCTY's sister station, Channel 28, on the following dates and times: August 1 and 3 (2 a.m., 8 a.m., 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.) and August 5, 9 and 11 (4 a.m., 10 a.m., 4 p.m., 10 p.m.).

Next Steps

The city will host a series of facilitated public input sessions in August, at five locations where the education sessions were held. These sessions will open with a brief presentation on the city's goals and possible options, followed by small, facilitated group discussions on several key questions and issues. After receiving this input from citizens, the city will prepare a draft long-term control plan and release it for public review and comment. Following an official public hearing, the city will finalize its plan and submit it to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for their review and approval. Target dates for the draft plan, hearing, and final plan have not been set.

Fighting Raw Sewage Overflows

The Issues and Options
for Improving Our
Indianapolis Waterways



CSO Education Sessions
July 2000



What Are Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs)?



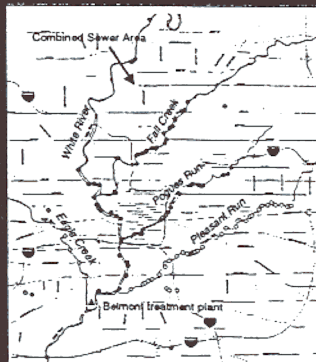
- In older parts of the city, sewers carry both sewage and stormwater away from buildings and streets (making them combined)
- When the weather is dry, these combined sewers carry sewage to the city's treatment plants
- When it rains or snow melts, these sewers can be overloaded, and overflow

CSO Education Sessions



Sewer Overflow Points

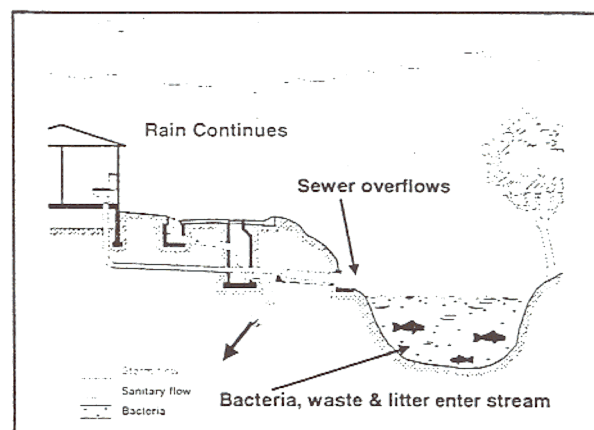
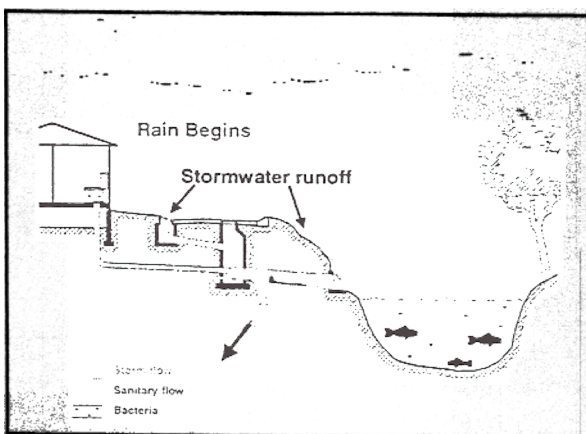
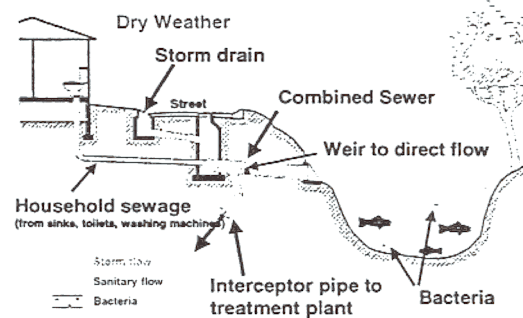
- Sewage overflows into the White River and its tributaries at 134 places - spilling 6 billion gallons of contaminated water each year

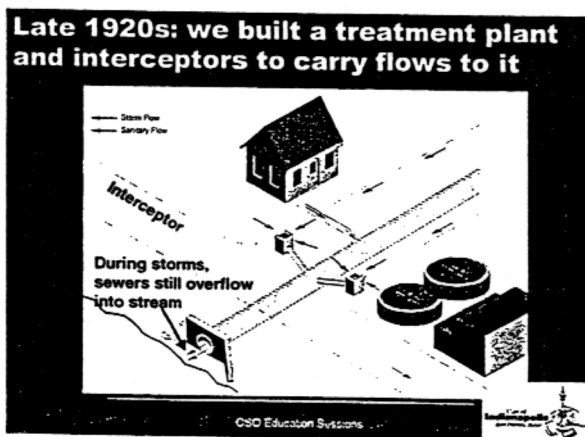
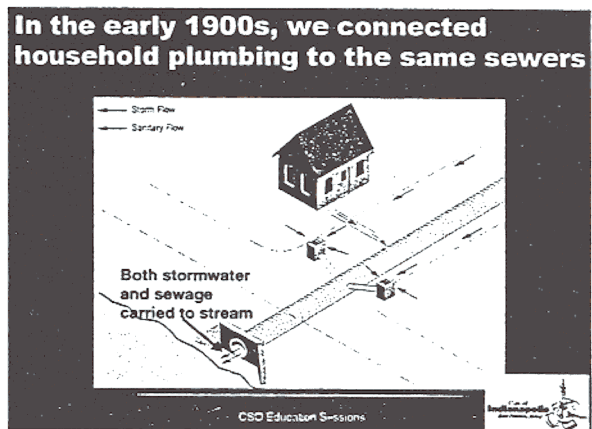
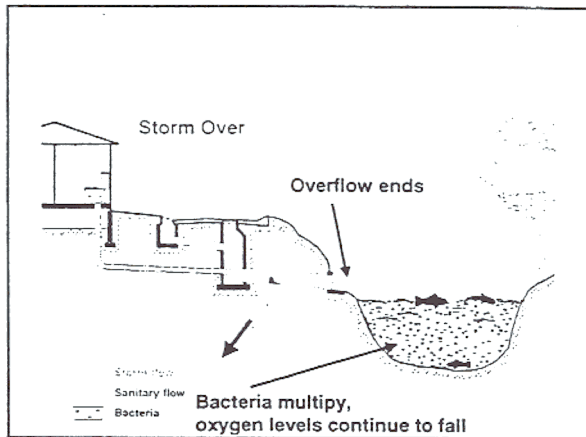
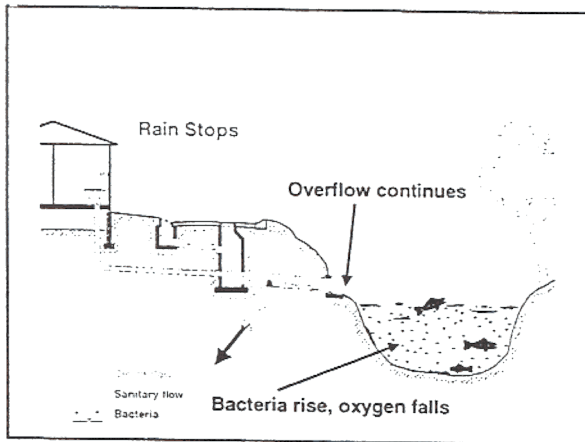


CSO Education Sessions



What Happens When Our Sewers Overflow?





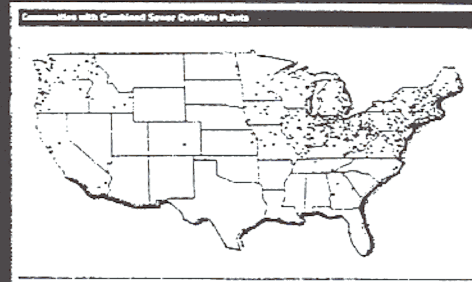
We Must Develop A Watershed-Based Strategy to Meet Indiana's Water Quality Goals

Fighting Sewage Overflows Is Just the First Step

CSO Education Sessions



Indianapolis Is Not Alone: Almost 1,000 U.S. Cities With CSOs



CSO Education Sessions



What is being done?

Report released July 11, 2000, outlining city's options based on 7 years of study and activities

Gather public input on control alternatives

- Public education sessions (July)
- Public input sessions (August)
- Mayor's CSO advisory committee
- City-County Council

Develop draft long-term control plan

Public hearing on draft plan

Submit long-term control plan to IDEM and EPA

CSO Education Sessions



Indianapolis' Goals for Fighting Sewage Overflows

- Improve neighborhood quality of life by eliminating solids and floatables in our streams
- Capture the first flush of stormwater entering the sewer system. The first flush contains solids that have accumulated in the pipes since the previous storm.
- Increase oxygen levels to protect fish
- Decrease bacteria levels to protect people

CSO Education Sessions



Improve Neighborhood Quality of Life

- Improve sights and smells when it rains
- Eliminate solids and floatables caused by sewage overflows
- Solids and floatables include human waste, toilet tissue, floating trash, and other solids that are flushed down toilets or washed from streets into sewers



CSO Education Sessions



Capture the "First Flush"

- The first rainwater or snow melt (first flush) entering the combined sewer during wet weather contains sewage solids that have accumulated since the previous storm
- The first flush carries the highest concentration of pollution
- Capturing and treating the "first flush" can significantly improve our streams



CSO Education Sessions

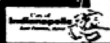


Increase Oxygen Levels

- Create an environment to support healthy fish, insects, and plant communities in our streams
- Meet or exceed water quality standards for oxygen in our streams



CSO Education Sessions



Decrease Bacteria Levels

- Reduce the amount of time that CSOs cause waterways to exceed water quality standards for bacteria
- Sewage overflows are not the only source of bacteria in our waterways
- However, controlling sewage overflows is the first step toward making our waterways safer for human contact



CSO Education Sessions



There Are 3 Strategies We Can Take to Directly Address Sewage Overflows

1. Capture and store more sewage in the current sewer system where capacity exists during wet weather (but without causing sewer backups)
2. Expand wastewater treatment plants to reduce heavy overflows and treat more wastewater during wet weather
3. Build new storage facilities to capture additional wastewater

CSO Education Sessions



Other Things We Can Do To Improve Water Quality:

- Replace septic systems
- Improve industrial pretreatment
- Reduce infiltration and inflow
- Improve stormwater management
- Restore streambanks to more natural state
- Prevent pollution through street cleaning, water conservation, etc.

CSO Education Sessions



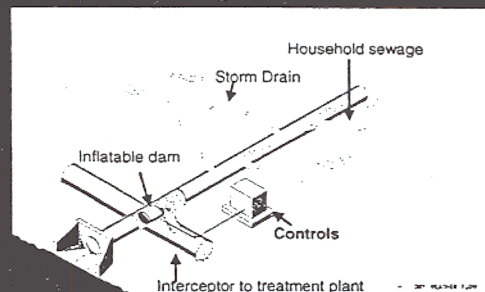
Strategy #1: Capture and Store More Combined Sewage in the Current Sewer System

- Many of the large pipes in the current sewer system do not fill completely during a storm
- Could use inflatable dams or mechanical gates to hold back flows, using electronic sensors to monitor rainfall and sewage levels in pipes
- High-tech, computerized system releases sewage when pipes get too full, preventing sewer backups

CSO Education Sessions



Capture and Storage in Current Sewer System



CSO Education Sessions



Strategy #2: Expand Wastewater Treatment Plants



Southport treatment plant

- During wet weather, some of heaviest pollution to White River comes from outfalls at or near Belmont treatment plant
- New permit will require the city to better control/eliminate these overflows during wet weather - which means increasing treatment and storage capacity at Belmont and Southport plants

CSO Education Sessions



Largest sewage overflows come from outfalls near Belmont Wastewater Treatment Plant

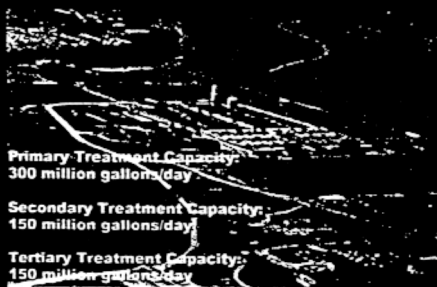
Largest Sewage Overflow Points (*Outfalls close to or associated with Belmont AWT)

Outfall Number	Waterbody	Est. Annual Overflow Volume (million gallons per year)
P.E. Bypass (007)*	White River	2,200
CSO 118*	White River	402-554
CSO 039	White River	200-271
CSO 003*	White River	270-369
CSO 115	Pleasant Run	311-430
CSO 051	Fall Creek	212-295
CSO 063	Fall Creek	162-225
CSO 117*	White River	155-210
CSO 031A	Pleasant Run	108-148
CSO 061	Fall Creek	184-258

CSO Education Sessions



Belmont Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant



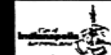
CSO Education Sessions



Possible Plant Improvements:

- Phase I: Double secondary treatment capacity at Belmont from 150 to 300 million gallons/day; increase primary treatment capacity at Southport
- Phase II: Increase primary treatment capacity at Belmont by 150-300 million gallons/day, allowing the plant to treat 450-600 million gallons/day during wet weather

CSO Education Sessions



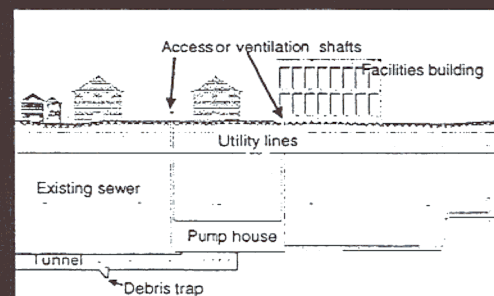
Strategy #3: Build New Storage Facilities to Capture More Wastewater Volumes

- Underground tunnels
- Storage tanks
- Store sewage during storms, releasing it after storm to treatment plant
- Would capture first flush
- Larger storage captures more overflow, but increases the construction costs

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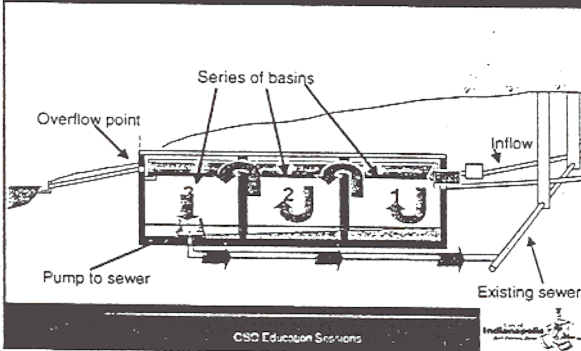
Diagram of an Underground Tunnel



CSO Education Sessions

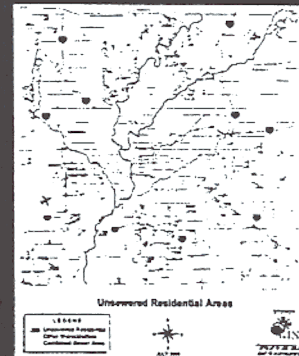


Diagram of an Underground Tank



Converting Septic Systems to Sewers

- Indianapolis has 18,000 homes served by septic systems. Many are failing.
- Replacing septic systems would reduce bacteria in streams, especially during dry weather



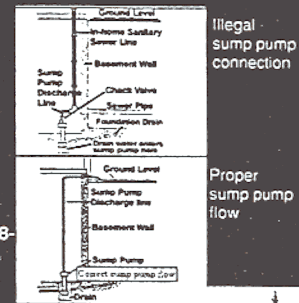
Industrial Pretreatment

- Industries discharge treated wastewater into sewers
- Requiring additional treatment or controls could reduce pollution or volume of wastewater in sewer system



Infiltration/Inflow Reduction

- Reduce groundwater & rainwater entering sanitary sewers
- Creates additional carrying capacity to transport sewage
- 8-10 illegally connected sump pumps can fill an 8-inch sanitary sewer designed to serve 200 homes



Stormwater Management

- Retention ponds, wetlands, buffer strips and other practices can reduce pollutants in stormwater before it enters the sewer system



Wetland

Streambank Restoration

- Rebuild streambanks to create tree canopies and restore wildlife habitat
- Especially beneficial along smaller streams



Pollution Prevention

- Street cleaning, water conservation, solid and hazardous waste collection and other practices can reduce or eliminate pollution before it enters the sewers and our streams



CSO Education Sessions



Key Issue: How Much Sewage Control Should Indianapolis Choose?

How much storage will we build along each stream?



CSO Education Sessions



What Are the Options and What Can We Afford?

- About 60 times per year, we have storms large enough to cause sewage overflows. These overflows can last up to three days after a storm, depending on the storm's severity.
- The more we reduce overflows, the more it will cost
- Decision will be based on public input and federal/state environmental requirements
- Three possible targets for reducing overflows: 12 storms/year, 7 storms/year, or 4 storms/year

CSO Education Sessions



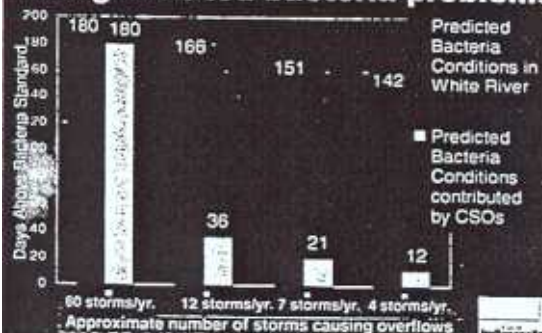
Possible Overflow Targets

Approx. # of storms causing overflows	Eliminates solids & floatables	Captures first flush	Meets or exceeds oxygen standard	System-wide volume capture
12 storms/year	Yes	Yes	Meets	85% (EPA guideline)
7 storms/year	Yes	Yes	Exceeds	92%
4 storms/year	Yes	Yes	Exceeds	96%

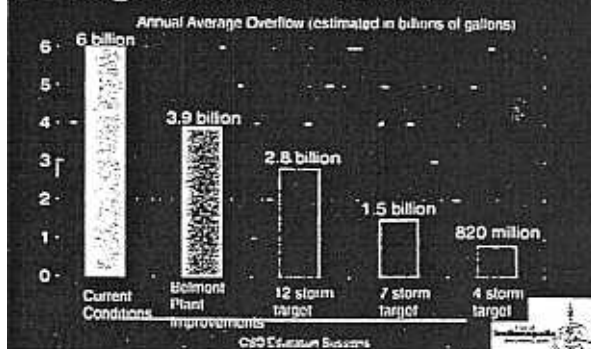
CSO Education Sessions



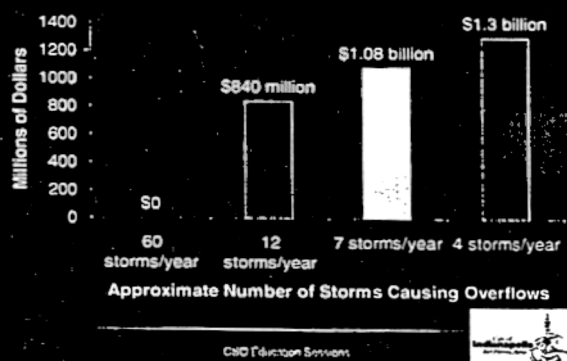
How the options would reduce sewage-related bacteria problems



How the options would reduce sewage overflow volume

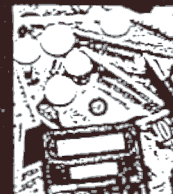


How much will these options cost?



How Will This Affect Monthly Sewer Bills?

- Current monthly average bill: \$10.91
- To cover costs during the next five years, the project will require an initial \$1.94 per month sewer bill increase in 2001.
- This helps provide \$184 million to pay for treatment plant expansion and design and engineering work for any CSO control alternatives we select.
- Other sewer rate increases will be required later to pay for the construction projects



CSO Education Services

How Much Will Construction Costs Add to Sewer Bills?

Final costs will be based on:

- Level of CSO control we choose (how much storage we have to build)
- State and federal regulatory approval of city's plans
- Funding sources - loans and grants
- Financing methods and repayment schedule
- Changes in technology that might reduce costs

CSO Education Services

Key Issue: Sensitive Areas Our highest priority along each waterway could go to controlling CSOs in sensitive areas:

- Nature preserves
- City parks
- Greenways
- Boat launches
- Fishing areas
- Places where children play / wade in the water

CSO Education Services

What sensitive areas along our streams deserve priority attention?



Special Options Being Considered Along Fall Creek & White River

- Artificial waterfalls
- Fountains
- Reclamation facility (Fall Creek only)
- Dam removal or modifications

CSO Education Services

Problem Areas Along White River



CSD Education Systems



Artificial Waterfall (Aeration Facility)



Chicago Sidestream Aeration Project

CSD Education Systems



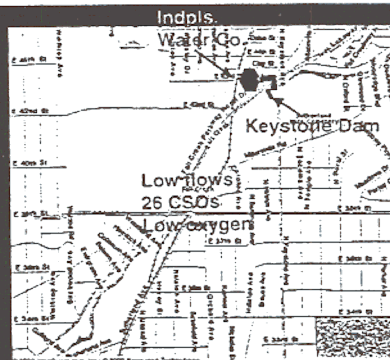
Fountains



CSD Education Systems



Problem Areas Along Fall Creek



CSD Education Systems



Reclamation Facility



CSD Education Systems



Modifying or Removing Dams



Keystone Dam on Fall Creek

CSD Education Systems



We Need Your Input to Select Affordable Options to Improve Our Waterways!

- Read the full report at www.indygov.org or visit your local library.

- Attend a Public Input session to evaluate these alternatives:

August 17 - Allisonville Christian Church, 7-9:30 p.m.

August 19 - City County Building, 9-11:30 a.m.

August 21 - Pike Township Government Center, 7-9:30 p.m.

August 22 - Southeastern Church of Christ, 7-9:30 p.m.

August 23 - Wayne Township Trustees Office, 7-9:30 p.m.

- Post comments on website, by mail, or by calling 706-2622

City of Indianapolis



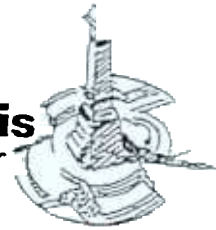
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, July 11, 2000

CONTACT:

Steve Campbell, [317] 327-3622
and www.IndyGov.org/CSO

City of
Indianapolis
Bart Peterson, Mayor



Mayor Begins Process to Fight Sewage Dumping, Urges Citizen Involvement

INDIANAPOLIS – Mayor Bart Peterson today called for solutions to the city's century-old problem of raw sewage overflows into public waterways, and released a study outlining options to clean up the city's rivers, creeks and streams. He also urged citizens to help evaluate the alternatives through an upcoming series of public meetings and forums.

"At the dawn of the 21st Century, it is simply unacceptable for this city to continue releasing sewage into our waterways at such an alarming rate," the Mayor said. "The federal government is pushing cities to fix the problem, and I agree that action in Indianapolis is long overdue."

"Our challenge will be to choose environmentally effective options that the city can afford over the next 20 years or so," he added. "But it's time to start fixing the problem today, so it won't cost us billions more in the future."

More than 100 years ago, the City of Indianapolis built a "combined" sewer system that is still used today. It carries sewage, storm water and industrial waste away from homes, streets and factories in the same set of pipes. To avoid backups into homes, the system sends waste directly into Indianapolis waterways.

During dry weather, sewage is carried through the city's sewer system to two treatment plants, which adequately handle the job of storing and filtering sewage. However, when as little as a quarter-inch of rain falls or snow melts, the extra water overloads the sewers, dumping raw sewage, human waste, toilet paper, disease-causing bacteria, such as *E. coli*, viruses, industrial waste, oil, grease and other pollutants directly into the city's rivers, streams and creeks.

This causes combined sewer overflows (CSOs), which pose serious health and environmental risks to residents.

"If it rains today, tomorrow or the next day, it's almost guaranteed that raw sewage will be dumped into rivers and streams near homes, schools, parks and businesses," the Mayor said. "In order to be a world-class city, we can no longer ignore this problem."

Under the federal Clean Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management require cities to publicly evaluate a range of control options and to develop and submit a long-term control plan based on the most cost-effective alternatives for meeting clean water goals.

The report released today represents seven years of research conducted by the city Departments of Public Works and Capital Asset Management. It details three major engineering options to reduce raw sewage overflows:

(more)

Mayor's Press

25-42 City County Building	[317] 327 3690
200 East Washington Street	[fax] 327 3686
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204	[TDD] 327 5186
	Indygov.org

- (1) Technologies to store more wastewater in the existing sewer system for later treatment,
- (2) Building new storage capacity, either above or underground, and
- (3) Increasing treatment capacity at the city's two wastewater treatment plants.

Other options could include accelerating the replacement of septic systems with sewers and better storm water management.

The report describes various alternatives under each option and provides estimated costs for design, construction, and operation and maintenance over the next 20 years. In all likelihood, the city will need some combination of options to meet state and federal requirements.

Under the most cost-effective scenario, the project would cost approximately \$840 million, spread over 20 years.

It is difficult to predict exactly how it would affect monthly sewer bills, the Mayor said, because final costs depend on such factors as the specific technologies chosen, the construction schedule and the financing method, including interest rates and loan terms. In addition, emerging technologies might be used in the future to more efficiently and quickly address the problem.

The city will also aggressively pursue federal and state assistance to help fund these solutions and cushion the effect on ratepayers, the Mayor said.

However, the city controller has estimated that during the next five years, the project would require a one-time \$1.94 sewer bill increase in 2001. This covers the treatment plant upgrades and design and engineering work necessary for whatever control alternatives are chosen.

Currently, Indianapolis average sewer rates – \$10.91 per 7,000 gallons – are significantly lower than current rates in surrounding communities such as:

Carmel, \$19.78	• Cincinnati, \$25.33	South Bend, \$17.98
• Greenwood, \$21.48	• Columbus, OH, \$24.29	Evansville, \$29.23
• Greenfield, \$23.63	• St. Louis, \$17.61	Fort Wayne, \$15.41.
• Brownsburg, \$27.65	• Louisville, \$19.95	

Since many of these cities are also dealing with the same sewage overflow issues, their rates will likely rise as well. Indianapolis sewer bills are still expected to be lower than or comparable to their rates, even with a rate increase.

Mayor Peterson also announced a series of public meetings designed to both educate citizens and involve them in decision-making. He also appointed an Advisory Committee, which will help gather public input and advise the Mayor as the city prepares its long-term control plan.

"This is a very challenging issue for our community, and that's why I urge all citizens to get involved and make their ideas known," he added. "We have to face this problem head on, but we also have to be fair to ratepayers."

The first set of public meetings, planned for this month, will help citizens learn more about the federal requirements and scientific and financial issues dealing with sewage overflows. The second set of meetings will give citizens a formal opportunity to submit ideas that could be incorporated into the long-term control plan. A final official hearing is also in the works.

For more information, citizens can call the CSO Hotline at [317] 706-2622 or logon to www.IndyGov.org/CSO.

Education Meetings

Tues., July 25	7-9 p.m.	Pike Township Government Center 5665 Lafayette Rd. (293-1842)
Wed., July 26	7-9 p.m.	Wayne Township Trustee's Office, Community Room 5401 W. Washington St. (241-4191)
Thur., July 27	7-9 p.m.	Southeastern Church of Christ 6500 Southeastern Ave. (352-9296)
Sat., July 29	9-11 a.m.	City County Building, Public Assembly Room 200 E. Washington St.
Mon., July 31	7-9 p.m.	Allisonville Christian Church 7701 Allisonville Rd. (849-3957)

Public Input Sessions

Thur., August 17	7-9:30 p.m.	Allisonville Christian Church
Sat., August 19	9-11:30 a.m.	City County Building, Public Assembly Room
Mon., August 21	7-9:30 p.m.	Pike Township Government Center
Tues., August 22	7-9:30 p.m.	Southeastern Church of Christ
Wed., August 23	7-9:30 p.m.	Wayne Township Trustee's Office, Community Room

Advisory Board Meetings

Mon., July 24	2:30-4:30 p.m.	Indpls.-Marion Co. Library Services Center, Room 226B 2450 N. Meridian St. (269-5215)
Wed., August 2	2:30-4:30 p.m.	City County Building, Room 260
Mon., August 28	2:30-4:30 p.m.	City County Building, Room 224
Thur., Sept. 14	2:30-4:30 p.m.	City County Building, Room 224
Thur., Oct. 12	2:30-4:30 p.m.	City County Building, Room 224
Wed., Nov. 15	2:30-4:30 p.m.	City County Building, Room 107

Public Hearing – TBA

Mayor unveils 20-year plan to clean up city's sewer overflows



By John Strauss
STAFF WRITER

With a polluted neighborhood stream as his backdrop, Mayor Bart Peterson on Tuesday announced the start of a long-term plan to plug the city's overflowing sewers.

But the mayor's 20-year time frame to fix the sewers isn't sitting well with some local residents and environmental specialists.

"I think it's too long. I think over the next 10 years this problem should be handled," said Rachael Cooper, president of the South East Community Organization. "We in the neighborhoods have worked with this for years."

Peterson said residents would see a sewer rate increase of less than \$2 a month in the next five years. Beyond that, he said, it was impossible to say how much rate-payers would have to contribute.

"This is the 21st century, and yet still today we dispose of raw sewage, untreated, directly into our streams and rivers across Marion County," Peterson said at a news conference along Pleasant Run southeast of Downtown.

"It is a health risk where we live and where we play. It is an environmental risk. It is abuse and mistreatment of one of our most important environmental assets ... and it is smelly and disgusting."

The mayor released a study that

had been in development under the previous administration. Three proposals are listed.

While the final remedy hasn't been selected, the cost has been determined. Peterson said the city will spend \$184 million over the next five years and a total of \$840 million to \$1.3 billion in the next two decades.

Estimates from the previous city administration last year said stopping the sewer overflows likely would cost \$8 billion — which Peterson, in the midst of the campaign for mayor, said was absurdly high.

The first, five-year phase of the

3 options for ending sewage overflows

A group of engineering consulting firms identified three options for stopping sewage overflows into White River and other local streams. The final plan could include elements from each of the alternatives:

- Improve the city's two wastewater treatment plants to increase their capacity, or the gallons treated daily.

- Maximize the capacity of the sewer system so it can hold back water during rains instead of overflowing into streams.

- Construct storage areas near the streams that are being polluted so contaminated water can be stored temporarily until the system is able to handle it.

Whatever option is chosen will include a high-tech "real time" computerized method for controlling sewage flow. That will allow officials to monitor rainfall in different areas of the county and temporarily hold back the flow of sewage through underground pipes.

See SEWER Page 5

Committee seeks solutions to sewer overflows

■ Mayor selects community and business leaders to gather input from residents affected by problem.

By Kristina Buchthal
STAFF WRITER

Combine water, soap, sand, dirt, rocks, wrappers, toilet paper and a handful of gravy-making dog kibble.

What do you get?

A simulation of the raw sewage that flows into Indianapolis' rivers and streams more than 60 times a year.

At least that's how the mayor's staff sees it. They'll be doing that demonstration and holding informational lectures around the city this week to educate Indianapolis residents about the combined sewer-overflow problem. The first meeting will be tonight in Pike Township.

The education sessions are one part of Mayor Bart Peterson's plan to find a solution to the city's widespread waterway pollution.

Every time the city gets significant rainfall, its century-old network of combined storm and sanitary sewers overflows. Rainwater mixed with tons of untreated sewage pours into Fall Creek, Pleasant Run, Pogues Run, Eagle Creek and White River.

On Monday, Peterson appointed 14 community and business representatives to serve on the Combined Sewer Overflow Advisory Committee. The group will review options for restructuring the city's sewer system.

At the committee's first meeting

pledge to stop the pollution.

"It's disgusting. It smells and it diminishes the quality of life in this city," he said. "This is a health hazard."

Earlier this month, Peterson estimated that repairs would cost the city between \$840 million and \$1.3 billion. That translates to about \$2 more on residents' monthly sewer bills.

The committee also will hold meetings in mid-August to hear from Indianapolis residents how overflows affect them and which areas should be cleaned first.

"We need to go to people and ask where are the places where children are playing, where people are fishing? We want to clean those up first," said B.J. Bischoff, a Peterson consultant who led the meeting Monday. "There's no map with

Learn more about the problem and offer input

Public educational meetings on combined sewer-overflow problems will be held:

■ Today, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., Pike Township Government Center, 5665 Lafayette Road.

■ Wednesday, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., Wayne Township Trustee's Office, Community Room, 5401 W. Washington St.

■ Thursday, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., Southeastern Church of Christ, 6500 Southeastern Ave.

■ Saturday, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., City County Building, Public Assembly Room, 200 E. Washington St.

■ Monday, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., Allisonville Christian Church, 7701 Allisonville Road.

The Combined Sewer Overflow Advisory Committee will hold public input sessions:

■ Thursday, Aug. 17, 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Allisonville Christian Church.

■ Saturday, Aug. 19, 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., City County Building, Public Assembly Room.

■ Monday, Aug. 21, 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Pike Township Government Center.

■ Tuesday, Aug. 22, 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Southeastern Church of Christ.

■ Wednesday, Aug. 23, 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Wayne Township Trustee's Office, Community Room.

Mayor to stress lower cost of stopping sewer overflows

■ Solutions shouldn't push sewer bills near levels suggested by GOP last year, Peterson says.

By John Strauss
STAFF WRITER



File Photo

Behind: Other cities face similar problems, but Indianapolis lags in finding a solution, Mayor Bart Peterson said.

administration was inflating the cost for political advantage.

At that time, the city estimated the new state restrictions would require a staggering \$8 billion in improvements, which would push average sewer bills to \$150 from \$10.

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management said the cost would be nowhere near that high. But some Republicans suggested the agency, under the administration of Democratic Gov. Frank O'Bannon, was pressuring the city to create political advantage for Peterson.

Today's announcement will include a range of possible long-term solutions, with price tags starting at around \$1 billion, phased in over a period of years. The last permit for its two treatment plants on the Southwestside expired 10 years ago, and the plants have been operating under temporary extensions since then.

The mayor's pending announcement led Republicans on the City-

County Council to delay action on a resolution asking Peterson to share the details of any agreement he might reach with federal and state regulators before it is signed.

While the GOP-controlled council is nervous about the big price tag, members decided to give the mayor time to make his case rather than pass the resolution on the eve of his expected news conference.

But recent actions by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have Councilwoman Beulah Coughenour, the Republican chairwoman of the council's Public Works Committee, worried that the price could be far more than the mayor is projecting.

The EPA has filed two information requests with the city of the sort that is often followed by expensive federal mandates, she said. One of the requests could make the city liable for fines for past sewage overflows, she said.

"The federal government is not out to bankrupt the city of Indianapolis," Peterson said. "They are insistent that we deal with this problem, and they are losing patience with the city."

Other cities face similar overflow problems, the mayor said, but Indianapolis is behind others in finding ways to reduce the flow.

However, Peterson said he was not interested in criticizing the work done under Mayor Stephen Goldsmith, who served two terms and was in office during most of the time the city was without new wastewater treatment permits.

"We want to fix the problem, not fix the blame," Peterson said. "We want to move forward, not focus too much on what went on in the past."

Staff writer Doug Sword contributed to this report.

Awarding of MSA contract put on h

EDITORIALS

*"Let the people know the facts
and the country will be saved."*

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Peterson's CSO plan

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"We are very pleased with the generous response of the Indianapolis community."

The goal of the campaign was to collect needed items, educate residents about need and raise awareness that the need exists even during summer.

Road work

Stretch of Lafayette down to 1 lane today

One northbound lane of Lafayette Road for 400 feet north of 30th Street will be closed until 10 p.m. today while Indianapolis Water Co. repairs a broken main.

Sewer system meeting will inform, gather input

Staff Report

Public educational meetings combined sewer overflow problem and public input meetings are of Mayor Bart Peterson's plan to address the city's widespread waterway pollution.

City officials will talk about sewage problem, and community and business representatives review options.

The educational meetings will:

- Today, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., Wayne Township trustee's office, Community Room, 5401 W. Washington

- Thursday, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., Southeastern Church of Christ, 6500 Southeastern Ave.

- Saturday, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., City-County Building, Public Assembly Room, 200 E. Washington St.

- Monday, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., Allisonville Christian Church, 7 Allisonville Road.

The Combined Sewer Overflow Advisory Committee will have public input sessions:

- Thursday, Aug. 17, 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Allisonville Christian Church.

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MONDAY, JULY 17, 2000

15ANT
12, high
1 page 88



SPORTS
DREAMS OF OLYMPIC TRACK GLORY BEGIN, FADE
Marton Jones (left) jumps on team; Joyner-Kerssee falls. Page C1.



NATION
GENERAL MILLS TO EAT
Food giant will grow in \$10.5 t

THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR

EDITION

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty" II Cor. 3:17

Indiana is flush with septic woes

■ As much as 70 percent of systems are considered failing, inadequate; E. coli risks worry health officials.

By David Aake
Star Writer

Spending a billion dollars or more to fix Indianapolis' sewer problems won't end the pollution of local rivers and streams.

Because sewers are only half the issue.

Detrimental septic systems are causing equally serious problems in Marion County and throughout the state.

In some counties, up to 70 percent of all septic systems are considered inadequate and failing.

One county health official said communities in her rural community have been "just sitting in sewage" because of

■ Wetlands: firm builds purification pits. Page A4.

...failing septic systems.

Nearly a third of Hoosier families are served by the state's 800,000 septic systems. Among cities of the size, Indianapolis, with about 15,000 homes on septic systems, is "second worst" in Jacksonville, Fla.

A task force that studied the issue in Marion County urged that all septic systems in the county be eliminated, but hooking everyone up to sanitary sewers would cost about \$200 million.

Compare that to the city's annual sewer budget of \$2 million. Let Pegg Warrick, of the city's Department of Capital Asset Management do the math: "At that rate," Warrick said, "it would take 60 years."

See SEPTIC Page 4

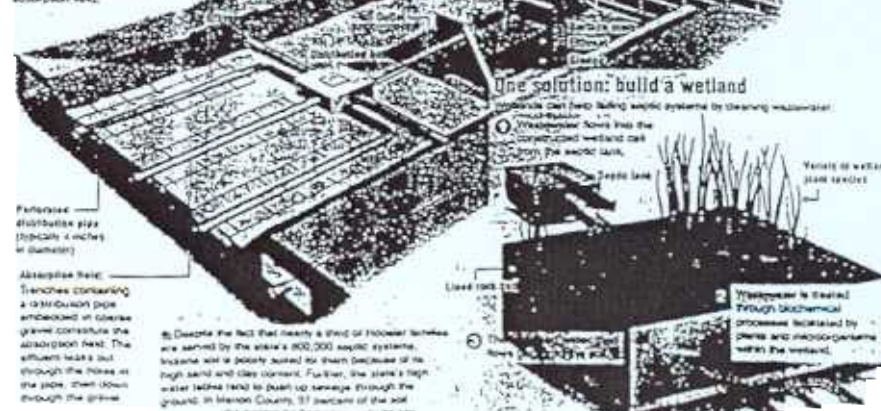


Star Photo / Karen Quary

Lead sewer under: Dan Parker of Meredith Septic installs an infiltrator system, which contains no gravel, in a back yard in Marion County, while John Chapman digs with a tractor.

How a septic tank system operates

In a typical system, wastewater flows from the household sewer into an underground septic tank. There the waste (components separate, the heavier solids (sludge) settling to the bottom, the grease and oily solids (float) floating up the top, and the more liquid portion (effluent) flowing through an outlet to the soil absorption field.



It describes the fact that nearly a third of Hoosier families are served by the state's 800,000 septic systems. Indiana will be poorly served for them because of its high sand and clay content. Further, the state's high water table tends to push up sewage through the ground. In Marion County, 57 percent of the soil

Server pipe: The pipe must have the proper slope — not so steep that the solids separate from the water and not so flat that the solids settle in the pipe. A slope of 1 to 2 percent is recommended. (A 1 percent slope is 1/8 inch drop in 100 feet of pipe.)

Continued from Page 1

And yet, it's a lot cheaper than fixing the sewers.

Glenn Pratt, a former state and federal environmental regulator who served on that septic task force, said it makes little sense to spend more than \$1 billion to fix city sewer overflow problems while largely ignoring its failing septic systems that could be fixed for a fraction of that cost.

"Compared to how many people get ill from combined sewers," Pratt said, "... a lot more people get ill from septic system problems."

He added that while the volume of effluent from sewer overflows is vastly greater, there is much more human contact with sewage from failing septic systems.

That poses many health hazards. Bacteria can be tracked into homes. Wells can be contaminated. Disease-carrying insects can breed in ditches badly polluted with sewage from failed septic systems.

It is a problem that is only getting worse, Pratt said, as septic systems age and reach the end of their life expectancy.

Despite the large number of septic systems, health officials say Indiana is poorly suited for them. A 1980 Purdue University study rated 80 percent of the soil in Indiana unsuitable for conventional septic systems.

The soil has too much sand or clay, for one thing. In southern Indiana, problems are exacerbated by limestone deposits and reclaimed coal mines.

And everywhere, water tables are high. That means during heavy rains, sewage in failed septic leach fields can be pushed up through the ground.

According to the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the

costs for septic systems varies from 100 percent in Delaware and Tipson counties to 60 percent in St. Joseph County.

In Marion County, more than 97 percent of the soil has severe limitations.

"In almost any county you care to look at, you will find a problem," said Howard Cundiff, director of consumer protection for the Indiana State Department of Health.

A properly built and maintained system can operate a long time, said Mark Waltermann, team leader of septic systems and wells for the Marion County Health Department.

But many systems were poorly built because the people installing them weren't trained or licensed, he said. Or they are old — built before indoor plumbing, washing machines, dishwashers and multiple bathrooms.

Many older systems consist of little more than 55-gallon drums discharging waste into ditches.

Few require certification

Alan Dunn, manager of the residential sewage disposal program for the Indiana State Department of Health, said that only 25 Indiana counties require certification.

One is Spencer County, where Rita Stallings, a former substitute teacher, has been the environmental health specialist for about three years.

Years ago, she said, anyone with a backhoe could install a septic system. Now installers must attend classes and pass an annual exam to be certified.

"Septic problems are almost the norm for our county, as is true of most counties in Indiana," Stallings said.

Problems caused by most septic failures involve E. coli bacteria, which can contaminate wells or be

similar to food poisoning, but many adults are so accustomed to living with stomach problems that they don't even bother to look for the cause, Stallings said.

Another health problem caused by septic system failures is oxygen deficiency, or blue baby syndrome, said Jane Frankenberger, an assistant professor of agriculture and biological engineering at Purdue University. It is caused by nitrates leaching into groundwater from failed septic systems.

She added that it can be difficult to tell if E. coli is coming from animals or humans.

Her project at Lakes Shafer and Freeman involves DNA testing to determine if the E. coli in ditches and streams leading into the lakes is caused by human sewage problems or animal waste.

Cost always is an issue when it comes to replacing septic systems. But the public's health should be more important.

"We want sewers everywhere," Waltermann said. "We would love it if this entire county were connected to sanitary sewers."

A costly fix

But many can't afford it. The typical homeowner's share of bringing new sewers to a neighborhood can be \$5,000 to \$15,000. Hooking up to that system can cost another \$500 to \$1,500. And then there's the average monthly bill of \$12.50, said John Burns, environmental health specialist for the Marion County Health and Hospital Corp.

Using the Barrett Law, the cost can be spread out over 10 years at a 7 percent interest rate.

But that's still too much for many homeowners, especially elderly ones on fixed incomes, Burns said. Those homeowners also have

long-term fix.

Former Mayor Stephen Goldsmith once proposed eliminating septic systems in Marion County by 2004.

When he left office, the new target date was 2044.

Many septic systems are failing in Crooked Creek on the Northwestside, said Kerry Manders, executive director of the Crooked Creek Community Council Inc. But people often are told they can't connect to the current sewer system because it lacks capacity.

Manders, who also is a member of the legislative Environmental Quality Service Council, has proposed giving people twice as long to pay for connecting to sewers and allowing cities to use money from the Wastewater Revolving Loan Fund to build sewer interceptors in areas that need them.

A couple of years ago, the city came up with a master plan to set priorities for bringing new sewers to about 163 areas, said Warnick. Barrett Law coordinator for the city's Department of Capital Asset Management.

Those priorities are based on the degree of health risk, the level of support from affected property owners and the availability of existing sewer lines.

If there are health problems, homeowners can be forced to connect to sewers whether they want to or not, Warnick said.

Otherwise, sewers can be put in if more than half of the homeowners want them.

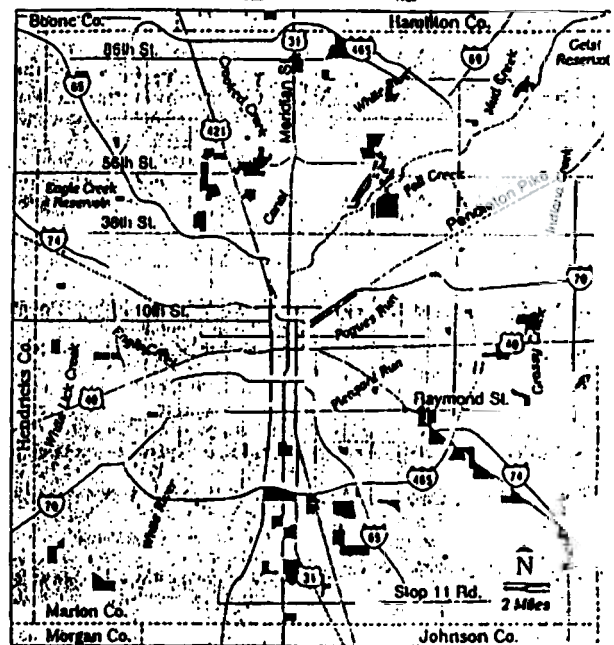
The Peterson Plan — Mayor Bart Peterson's campaign platform — pledged to address the septic system issue.

"These potential health risks require the city to closely examine the need and desire for city sewers

System failure

Aging septic systems in Marion County pose health risks, but the cost to repair and replace them is high.

Project areas: High priority Medium priority Low priority



In these areas," it stated.

But no major new money has been committed by Peterson's administration. Further, the city faces another major waste treatment expense as it is upgrading its antiquated sewers to meet state and federal requirements.

Some cities, such as Vallejo, Calif., have passed bond issues to quickly eliminate septic systems, Pratt said.

"Since these septic systems

never should have been approved and never been installed in the place," he said, "we as a city have an obligation to help solve the problem. Instead of leaving people with this huge payment they should have been stuck with."

Indianapolis officials have looked at how 30 other cities got people hooked up to sewers.

"Right now," Warnick said, "haven't found a better way to do it. We're still looking."

Ignoring the combination sewer down College Ave.

I've heard that Mayor Bart Peterson is going to be making massive overhauls of the severely antiquated and environmentally unsound sewer system in order to avoid more overflow and contamination of White River.

I'm wondering when he is going to address the problems of overflow and contamination of the homes in the proximity of the massive combination sewer that runs down the middle of College Avenue north of 54th Street.

I just received a settlement check for \$1,100 for loss of property and am waiting for the bill for cleanup from the last backup of sewage into my basement. This is about the seventh incident in the 17 years I've owned this home.

Don't talk to me about backup or overflow valves. They don't work. Those who have them say they get stuck in the open position. In addition, I would have to dig up my neighbor's driveway and lawn to get to my sewer connection to do this.

I should not have to do such a thing. It should be up to the city to bring its sewer system up to Environmental Protection Agency standards.

SANDRA MARSHALL
Indianapolis

6500 Southeastern Ave.
CHURCH OF CHRIST
7-9

FT residents will help pay for cleaning up the City's streams

public meetings scheduled to discuss plan to meet EPA requirements

The Departments of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) and Public Works (DPW) of the City of Indianapolis are hosting a series of public information meetings at various sites throughout Marion County to provide residents and property owners with an opportunity to learn about raw sewage overflows. Sewage is carried through the city's sewer system to two treatment plants, which

adequately store and filter sewage during dry weather. However, when as little as a quarter-inch of rain falls or snow melts, the extra water overloads the sewers, dumping raw sewage, human waste, toilet paper, disease-causing bacteria, viruses, industrial waste, oil, grease, and other pollutants directly into the City's streams and rivers.

The federal Environmental Protection Agency, through an

order administered by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, has required that Indianapolis, along with other cities across the country, act to eliminate this infrastructure and public health problem. Decisions that must be made regarding the methods and costs to fight raw sewage overflows will impact all of the residents and taxpayers in Marion County.

The City has scheduled a series of meetings to provide information to the public. By attending one of these educational meetings, residents will have an opportunity to learn about a report the City has prepared on how the City plans to correct this environmental hazard and improve our waterways and what the cost to sewer users and taxpayers will be. A copy of the report can be viewed and/or

downloaded from the City's web site at IndyGov.org/cso. Copies are also available for public viewing at all Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library branches.

Below are listed the meetings closest to Franklin Township. Another series of meetings will be held in August so members of the community can provide feedback and comments regarding the report.

PUBLIC MEETINGS FOR COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOWS

Monday, July 24th	2:30-4:30 p.m.	Library Services Center	2450 N. Meridian
Thursday, July 27th	7:00-9:00 p.m.	Southeastern Church of Christ	6500 Southeastern Avenue
Saturday, July 29th	9:00-11:00 a.m.	City County Building Public Assembly Room	200 E. Washington Street



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Secretary: Position requires computer, writing, proof-reading and organizational skills. No health insurance benefits. Call (317) 356-9729. 29

HOME HEALTH CARE

Comfort Home Health Care offers kind, compassionate, reliable care. 24 hr. service available. If needed, this includes housekeeping, cooking, grocery shopping, laundry,

GARAGE/MOVING SALES

11023 MAZERD, Fri-Sat, July 21-22, 8 a.m.-? Lots of goodies!!! Don't miss this one!

HUNGER, Inc. 1408 E. EPLER, Sat, July 22, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Help raise \$\$ for new building

Chamber Facts

July 24-28, 2000

www.indychamber.com • 317-464-2200



Dues, contributions and gifts to the ICOC are not deductible as a charitable contribution for federal income tax purposes. Because the Indianapolis Chamber focuses primarily on local issues, 93% of your dues are deductible as a business expense. Further information on this law should be obtained from your tax advisor.

Chamber News

INITA's Second Annual Workforce Conference

TechFORCE Indiana – “Increasing the Bandwidth” is INITA's second annual workforce conference. INITA, along with main sponsor Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, is hosting this workforce conference on Monday, August 7 at the Ritz Charles, 12156 North Meridian Street, Carmel. Cost is \$75 for members and \$125 for non-members; attendees can register online at www.inita.org.

This year's conference features nationally-known speakers, best practices from local companies, and opportunities to interact with representatives from Indiana's colleges and universities. The conference highlights successful recruiting programs, discusses strategies for winning the battle for IT talent, and provides tools and materials to help attendees maneuver through the recruiting maze for both college and experienced hires.

There are four breakout sessions scheduled, with each session highlighting a speaker and best practices of INITA members. Sessions will run twice and will tackle relationship-building, recruiting tactics, keeping and retraining existing employees and the challenges and benefits of internships. Refer to INITA's Web site at www.inita.org for complete schedule and registration information.

Space is limited, so register today at www.inita.org!

Save the Date!



Where can you meet Indy's candidates for the upcoming elections and hear their views on issues concerning you, register to vote, network with numerous informed business and political professionals, enjoy good food and drinks, and basically have a great time?

At the HobNob—An Election Showcase, Indianapolis' largest political event of the year. Join Paul I. Cripe, Inc. and the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce at the Union Station Grand Hall and Conference Center on Monday, October 5 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

HobNob 1999 was the biggest non-partisan political event of the year in Indy, and this year's event promises to be even bigger! Don't miss your chance to be part of the excitement.

Invitations will be sent to your business in September. Tickets are \$10, so encourage your employees to be a part of Indianapolis' political system, vote and attend HobNob 2000!

If you'd like more information on this upcoming event, contact Sandy

Combined Sewer Overflow Issues are High Priority

Raw sewage... it's flowing into our public waterways at an alarming rate. It's there by way of the Indianapolis sewer system. Our combined sewer system is over 100 years old and is currently unable to handle the job of storing and filtering sewage during any wet weather event. When rainfall or snow melts off as little as a quarter-inch, the system overflows, and loads rivers, streams and creeks with human waste, industrial waste and other pollutants. This pollution process is known as a combined sewer overflow (CSO) and has long been an issue followed by the Indianapolis Chamber.

At least three alternatives have been proposed in the city's new plan for tackling the sewer dilemma. Another alternative: an approximate 17.8% sewer-bill increase per household. At present, Indianapolis is paying HALF of what Greenwood, Anderson and Brownsburg residents are paying, and nearly one third of what Evansville residents pay.

Your Chamber Wants to Know:

How comfortable are you with increases in sewer bill rates? (Check one and fax back to 464-2217)

☐ I'm comfortable with a \$0-\$2.00 raise in sewer rates.

☐ I'm comfortable with a \$2.00-\$5.00 raise in sewer rates.

☐ I'm comfortable with a \$6.00-\$10.00



The Southside Times

M

July 27, 2000 • Serving the Greater Southside since 1928 • Vol. 73, No. 33

in brief...

Sewer rehab meeting tonight

A series of public meetings on Indianapolis's century-old problem of raw sewage overflows will start tonight on the Southside.

The first set of meetings will help citizens learn more about federal requirements and scientific and financial issues dealing with sewage overflows.

A second set of meetings in August will give citizens a formal opportunity to give feedback that could be incorporated into a long-term control plan. A final official hearing is also in the works.

The committee will meet at Southeastern Church of Christ, 6500 Southeastern Ave., today, 7-9 p.m.

For more information, citizens can call the CSO Hotline at 706-2622 or log on to www.IndyGov.org/CSO.

PETERSON UNVEILS

Sewer Plan

Mayor Bart Peterson unveiled a plan to clean the city's overflowing sewers. A group of engineering consultants have identified three options for ending sewer overflows, including increasing the capacity of wastewater treatment plants, making the sewer system's capacity larger and constructing storage areas to hold waste until it can be treated. A fourth option — asking city residents to "hold it" every other day of the week — is also being considered. Under this plan, residents with even-numbered addresses would "hold it" on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; odd-numbers would "hold it" on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Sundays would be optional. Citizens could "hold it" as a kind of community service in the "can do" tradition of Hoosier civic-mindedness, but would be free to "let it go" should the call of nature become an imperative.



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